

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 23 September 1967



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**DAILY BRIEF
23 SEPTEMBER 1967**

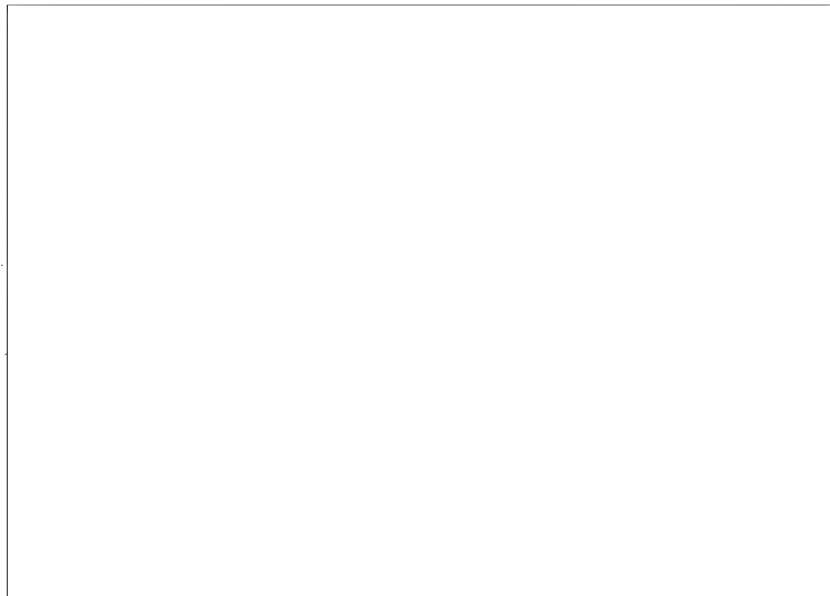
1. South Vietnam

It was more than just flimsy charges that led to the arrest yesterday of former economy minister Thanh. The US Embassy feels that the accusation that Thanh had been involved in pro-Communist activities merits careful investigation. It is based on information from a high-ranking Viet Cong officer captured last May.

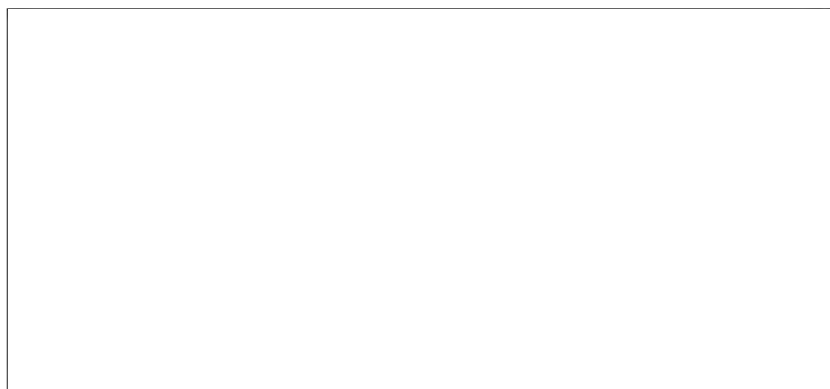
Even so, an investigation into Thanh's past has now become immeasurably more difficult because of the storm that has blown up over the heavy-handed police action against him yesterday.

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2. Greece

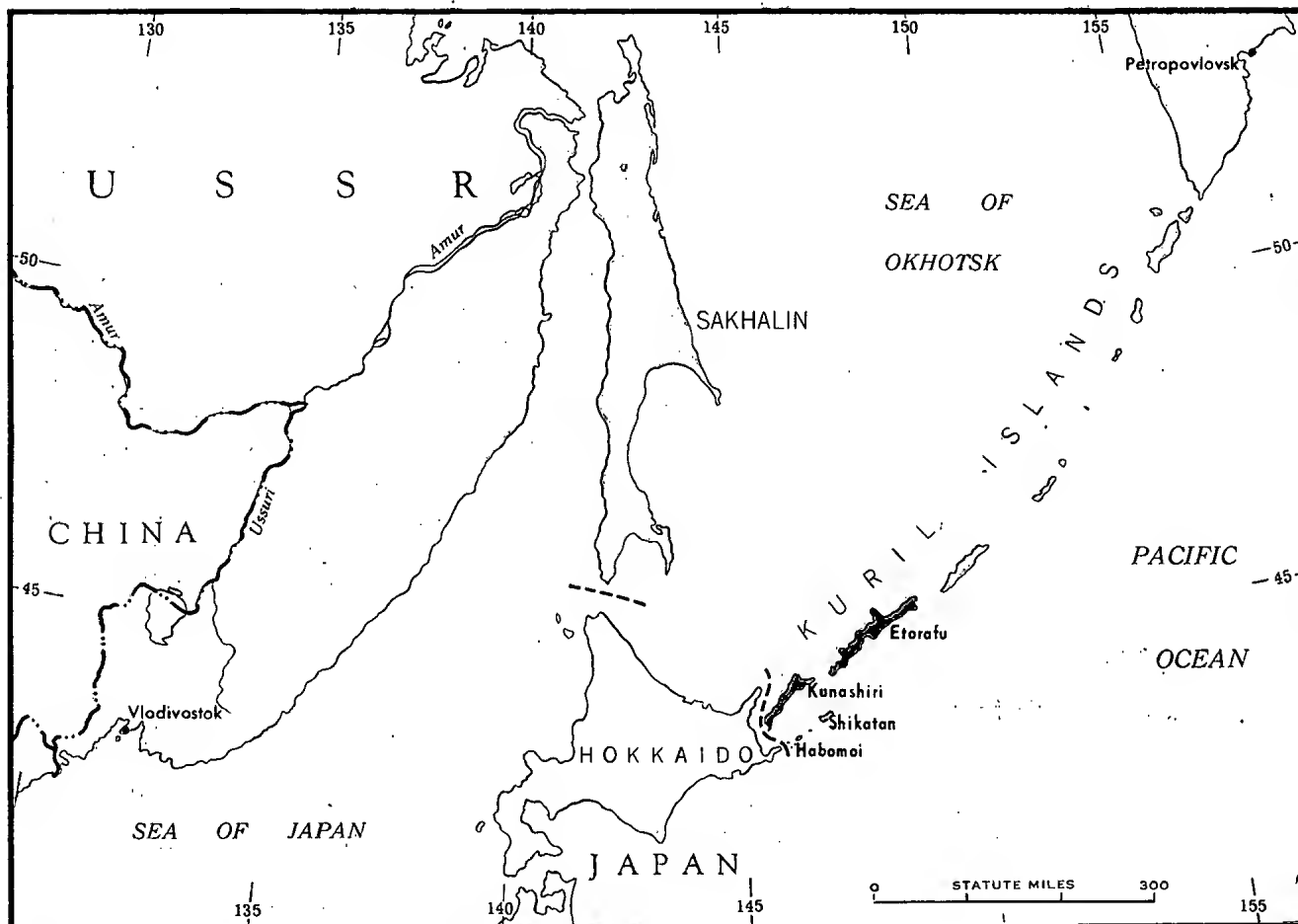


3. France



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4. Soviet Union

Yesterday Moscow made its first (and so far only) comment on Secretary McNamara's antiballistic missile announcement. Tass quoted a Soviet weekly which merely said that "this step promises huge profits for US corporations." This spare comment could mean that the Soviet leadership is still wrestling with how to react to the US announcement.

There has been strikingly little official reaction from the East Europeans, who appear to be awaiting their cue from Moscow.

5. Soviet Union

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6. Soviet Union

Moscow's offer to discuss with Japan the return of four islands seized at the end of World War II is a double-edged ploy. It is probably designed to embarrass the US while complicating life for Sato.

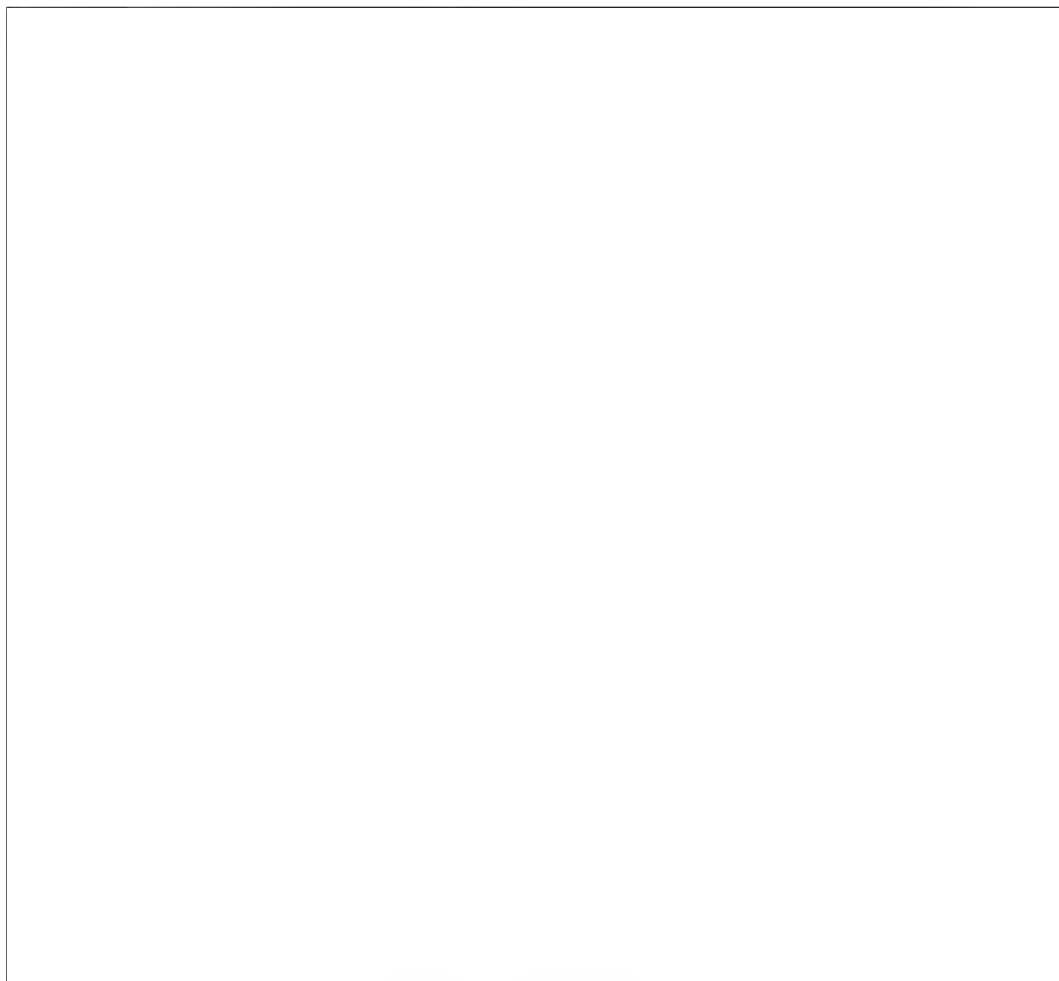
The Soviets presumably calculate that a hint of flexibility on a long dormant issue might encourage Sato to stiffen his position on the status of Okinawa during his Washington visit. For his part, Sato has no illusions that the Soviets will really concede anything but may see the talks as a way of deflecting domestic attention from the Okinawa issue.

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**SPECIAL DAILY REPORT ON NORTH VIETNAM
FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY**



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**Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
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Status of the Hanoi powerplant: Damage inflicted by air strikes against the Hanoi powerplant limits current operation to about one-half of installed capacity. This is in line with previous forecasts which predicted restoration to full capacity by no sooner than the end of the year.

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Giap's Analysis of the War--Continued: The last portion of the defense minister's analysis of the war is now in hand. It contains nothing startling and continues to profess confidence in ultimate victory.

Giap reaffirms that, although the Vietnamese Communists cannot hope to match the number of US and allied troops in the south, they can nonetheless wage the war successfully--by maintaining a "stalemate" until the US tires. He argues that this can be done by improving the quality of the Communist forces and by using superior tactics.

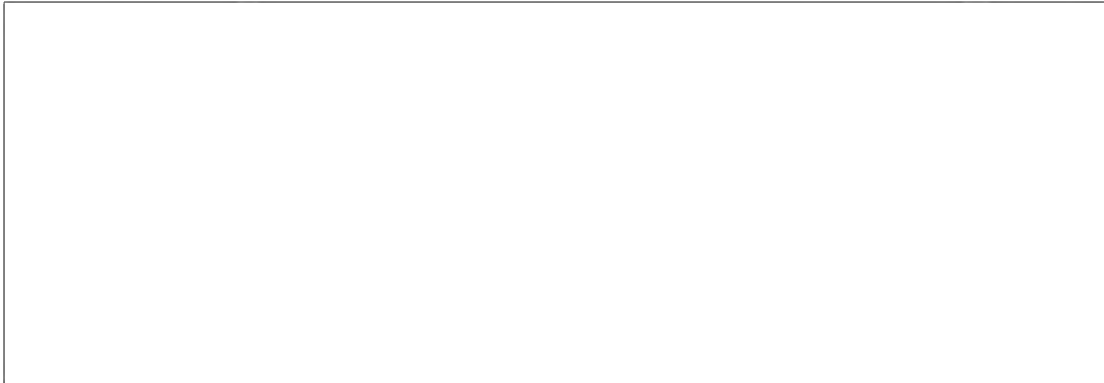
The North Vietnamese leader says he expects the US soon to increase its troop strength in the south by 50,000 and eventually by as many as another 100,000 to 200,000. This does not matter, he says. The Communists can counter this by giving a greater role to the irregulars and by increasing irregular strength. This is a subject that has been a controversial one in Hanoi. Giap has long argued that the guerrillas have a very important role to play, in conjunction with regular forces. His opponents have argued that the guerrilla role should be subordinate to that of the regulars.

Giap dismisses the concept of a "barrier" across the northern portion of South Vietnam in a few sentences, stating that it would be ineffective.

The problem of how best to defend North Vietnam also gets some attention. Giap refers both to air defense and to ground invasion, which he mentions as a possibility. He admits that some air defense units have performed poorly and calls for disciplinary measures against those whose "negligence" has caused avoidable damage.

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